

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
MFA FINAL VISUAL PRESENTATION

by

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A THESIS

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IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF FINE ARTS


IN

PAINTING

DEPARTMENT OF ART AND DESIGN

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FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

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Final Visual Presentation

submitted by BRAD JAY VANNIEUWENHUIZEN in
partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Fine Art.

The University of Alberta

RELEASE FORM

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FOR WHICH THESIS WAS GRANTED MASTER OF FINE ARTS

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DEPARTMENT OF ART AND DESIGN

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I hereby release the following works for incorporation into the University Collections,
University of Alberta, as part of the Master of Fine Arts Thesis Collection:

TITLE	DATE	MEDIUM	SIZE
Untitled	1996	Oxidized Panel	30" x 30"

ARTIST STATEMENT

Brad Vannieuwenhuizen

Over the past two years my work has explored various non traditional materials, primarily metal. Working with scrap and sheet metals presents a physical challenge. A vocabulary of cutting, layering, hammering, and smashing developed with the material. As the work matured the reliance on the bold physical use of the material subsided. Patinas, burnishing, grinding, and oxidizing became a new, more sophisticated, but subtle vocabulary to utilize. The development of the subject matter changed with the means of producing the work. The complexity of the subject matter was reduced to single objects in symmetrically balanced compositions. This is a marked contrast to the previously complex subjects with active, physical mark making.

The present work deals with a metamorphosis of undesirable materials to desirable objects. I am involved in finding beauty in the cast out, perhaps taboo materials I work with. The work challenges the viewers perception of these materials. Attention to the surface detail of the material is an important facet of the work, but is balanced by the subject matter of spacially rendered single objects. The objects are simple and utilitarian, chosen for their anonymity. They are raised to an iconic level, yet seem to question the idea of value. The element of time and age play a role in the works appearance and transformation. The galvanized works appear antique and weathered adding to a sense of desire. The oxidized pieces will continue to corrode slowly over time. The process will change the works appearance and the viewer's perception.

The vehicle used to produce the majority of the works is water. The works on steel are produced through oxidation. Repeated steps of applying water creates a base of rust to work with. Additions of salt and pigments to the rust and water create the image. The galvanized panels are manipulated by repeated steps of grinding, burnishing, sanding and applications of acid solutions. Various values and colours are achieved by watering down the acid in different levels.

I hope to achieve a sense of completion in the work, but leave interpretation to the viewer. What is seen in the work is dependant on what the viewer brings to the work. Ultimately the work can serve as a medium for meditation.

